



King County

1200 King County
Courthouse
516 Third Avenue
Seattle, WA 98104

Text File Report

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Controlling Body: Committee of the
Whole

Sponsors: Jane Hague

A MOTION approving the business case of the King County Health Reform Initiative.

WHEREAS, national health care costs in this country are skyrocketing, approaching a national crisis, and

WHEREAS, King County, like other employers in the region, state, and nation, is facing an urgent need to be able to provide affordable, available quality health care to employees while effectively containing the rise in employee health care costs, and

WHEREAS, King County the employee benefits budget is expected to increase eleven percent or more per year for at least the next five years, and

WHEREAS, the budget advisory task force recommended addressing the spiraling cost of health care, and

WHEREAS, to address this critical issue, an internal county team conducted a focused and comprehensive research effort to seek best practice approaches from research institutes as well as actual applications, and

WHEREAS, in November 2003, the King County council approved a four-year benefits labor-management collaboration project in the 2004 Budget Ordinance to develop an education strategy that drives home to employees the very real and personal effect the health care crisis has on their benefits and provides them resources and tools to obtain high quality health care at a price affordable to both the employees and the county, and

WHEREAS, in December 2003, King County Executive Ron Sims created the health care advisory task force ("HAT Force"), and

WHEREAS, the council adopted the initial findings report of the HAT Force by Motion 11890, in which the HAT Force recommended, among other things, that the county focus on reducing the "demand side" of health care by moving employees and family members with higher risks to lower risk, keeping those with lower risk healthy, and teaching consumers how to make more effective health care choices by conducting employee surveys and focus groups to determine the most relevant and effective communication programs for employees and their families, conducting an analysis of its health care utilization data to determine areas of intervention that will have the greatest effect on health care costs, and creating benefit designs that motivate employees and their families to choose identified quality providers, actively participate with their providers in their own health care, participate in wellness and prevention activities, and manage chronic health conditions, and

WHEREAS, the joint labor management committee has approved a new benefit package for 2007-2009 called Health Incentives that incorporates the recommendations of the HAT Force and industry best practices, and incorporates disease management, case management, health promotion, and other programs aimed at reducing the rate health care cost increases by helping county employees and their families get healthy and stay that way, and

WHEREAS, the 2005 adopted budget ordinance included a proviso requiring the executive to submit to the council for its review and approval by motion a business case for the disease management, case management, health promotion and other programs that are a part of the King County Health Reform Initiative, and

WHEREAS, the county executive has approved the business case of the King County Health Reform Initiative and has presented the report to the council in conformance with the proviso;

By September 1, 2005, the executive is requested to provide a program evaluation plan for the King County Health Reform Initiative. The plan shall be prepared by a consulting firm and concurrently submitted to council and the Health Reform Initiative policy oversight steering committee. The plan shall include a description of the research design and performance measures that will be used to evaluate the contribution of each program towards the county's overall goals of improving employee health and reducing employee health benefit costs. The plan shall include baseline county employee benefit costs, the approach to data collection and analysis, and the proposed timeline for reporting on achievement of annual targets for the four-year period 2006 through 2009. If a new evaluation and reporting unit is proposed by the executive and approved by the council, a revised King County Health Reform Initiative Program Charter reflecting this change shall be submitted to council. The program evaluation plan must be filed with the clerk of the council, who will retain the original and will forward copies to each councilmember and to the lead staff for the labor, operations and technology committee and the budget and fiscal management committee.